

Warren County Board of Supervisors

RESOLUTION NO. 633 OF 2022

RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY SUPERVISORS SEEBER, HOGAN, BRAYMER, LEGGETT AND DRISCOLL

RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING THE GOVERNOR AND NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE TO INCREASE STATE FUNDING SUPPORT FOR THE FOSTER CARE BLOCK GRANT TO PAY FOR THE RATE INCREASE ENACTED IN THE SFY 2023 BUDGET AND ALSO INCREASE STATE FUNDING FOR SAFETY NET PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, over the last 15 years, New York State has developed away from their historic and constitutional responsibility to provide social services and support for low-income families and individuals, as demonstrated through significant reductions in state financial support for these programs, thereby shifting state costs and responsibilities to counties and New York City, and

WHEREAS, these state funding shifts have increased county and New York City social services costs by hundreds of millions of dollars annually because the state requires that all services still be provided in full, sometimes including new and more comprehensive service levels, but with fewer state resources, and

WHEREAS, these cuts include lowering state fiscal matching funds for Safety Net Programs from 50 percent to 29 percent along with maximizing federal funding to offset some of this loss, but the federal funds no longer offset losses for most counties today, and

WHEREAS, the enacted New York State Fiscal Year 2023 budget eliminated the 45-day waiting period for cash assistance under the Safety Net Program, which will increase county (\$22 million dollars) and New York City (\$40 million dollars) costs by \$62 million dollars annually, and

WHEREAS, state funding support for the Foster Care Block Grant was cut by \$62 million dollars in State Fiscal Year 2018, a 14 percent reduction, and

WHEREAS, the enacted State Fiscal Year 2023 budget included provisions to settle longstanding state litigation related to inadequate foster care rates paid to foster parents in New York City, and

WHEREAS, counties were not a party to this settlement, nor consulted during state settlement

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negotiations, and

WHEREAS, state funding for the Foster Care Block Grant is capped, which means counties are required to pay the full cost of the scheduled rate increases that will be spread over two years and will likely range between 20 percent to 50 percent when fully implemented, and

WHEREAS, initial estimates of new costs upon full implementation are \$200 million dollars, (\$117 million dollars for New York City and \$83 million dollars for the 57 counties), and

WHEREAS, in a recent state negotiated settlement to end litigation related to the adequacy of state resources provided for indigent criminal defense services, the Hurrell-Harring agreement provided 100 percent state funding support for all new costs of the settlement, and this should be the model for all state settlements that increase costs, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Warren County Board of Supervisors hereby urges the Governor and New York State Legislature to fully fund the foster care rate increases included in the SFY 2023 budget, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Warren County Board of Supervisors hereby urges the Governor and New York State Legislature to increase the state's 29 percent Safety Net Program share back to 50 percent without further reducing any other public assistance reimbursement before considering future benefit expansions in this program, and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to the counties of New York State encouraging member counties to enact similar resolutions, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Kathy Hochul, the New York State Legislature, and all others deemed necessary and proper.